of Compulsory Certification by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), so that the quality of these products is checked and maintained at the manufacturing level itself.

(c) The PFA Act 1954 is administered by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Therefore, the notification was issued by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and not by Ministry of Consumer Affairs.

(d) All the manufacturers of Packaged Drinking Water have to take licence from the BIS for manufacture & sale of these products under the BIS Certification Mark and at present there are one hundered niety-nine licencees of packaged drinking water.

Wheat export to Iraq

†*65. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Iraq has refused to take wheat exported by India;

(b) if so, the number of occasions when wheat was exported to Iraq by India and the number of occasions when Iraq had refused to take it;

(c) the reasons mentioned by Iraq for not taking the wheat and whether Government have fixed any responsibility in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action Government have taken against them; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMBER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR): (a) to (e) Iraq has recently rejected four consignments of wheat shipped by three private parties from India insisting that the cargo should be totally free from inorganic matter, such as, sand, sillica, dust and asphalt, and also like insects.

As per the International CODEX standards, foreign matter in the grain is permissible upto 2% out of which 1.5% consists of organic matter, such as, chaff, weed seeds, other edible and non-edible grains etc. and the balance (0.5%) inorganic foreign matter, such as stones, dust, etc. Quality specifications prescribed in the Iraqi contract provided for the presence of foreign matter upto

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

2%. the inspection agency agreed by the Grain Board of Iraq had inspected the cargo prior to shipment and declared the wheat consignments fit for human consumption and conforming to the quality specifications of the Iraqi order. However, on arrival of the consignments at Iraqi ports, the Grain Board of Iraq insisted on "nil" tolerance for inorganic foreign matter.

The Indian delegation that visited Iraq in May, 2001 was informed by Iraqi authorities that, according to their definition, they do not count sand particles under foreign matter. In other words, inorganic matter, which is a part and parcel of foreing matter, like sand, stones, pebbles, clay particles, etc., are not accepted under this category. The explanation given by them was that only organic foreign matter (like chaff, glumes, weed seeds and other edible and inedible grains) are taken under this category. This position was not known to the exporters. They presumed that, as in the CODEX standards, the 2% foreign matter would include upto 0.5% in organic matter. The delegation was further informed that the Iraqi flour mills were not having adequate facilities for separation of inorganic matter because of the problem of spare parts required for maintenance of such machines owing to UN sanctions. The delegation was told that the Iraqi authorities had accordingly taken a decision to reject any wheat stocks found with inorganic matter like sand, stones, etc. The delegation was further informed that Iraq had also rejected the wheat source from various other countries on the same grounds. The exporters have been given the freedom to identify wheat stocks available in the Central Pool for the purpose of export. However, on receipt of reports of rejection of wheat consignments from India, it was decided that no further consignment of wheat would be sent to Iraq, unless it was cleaned to meet the specification of the Grain Board of Iraq.

Legislation for agriculture labourers

*66. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to introduce a Comprehensive Central Legislation for agricultural labourers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have started any Bima Yojana to assist the farm labourers; and